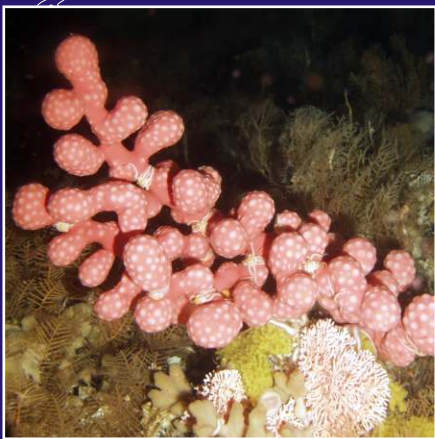
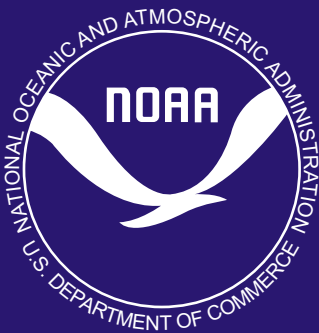




ALASKA GROUNDFISH FISHERIES

DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service Alaska Region

September 2003

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

**Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
for
Alaska Groundfish Fisheries
Implemented Under the Authority of the *Fishery Management Plans for the Groundfish Fishery of
the Gulf of Alaska*
and the
*Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area***

September 2003

Lead Agency: U.S.D.C. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region
Juneau, Alaska, and Seattle, Washington

Responsible Official: James W. Balsiger, Administrator, Alaska Region
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State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game
U.S. Coast Guard

Abstract: The environmental impact statements for the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea Aleutian Islands groundfish fishery management plans were prepared in 1978 and 1981, respectively. During the intervening years, the fisheries have evolved from primarily foreign fisheries to completely domestic fisheries. The management plans governing the fisheries have been amended numerous times. New information is available concerning the ecosystem, the science of fisheries management has progressed substantially, public opinion about management of these fisheries has changed and several bird and marine mammal species have been listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. This Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was prepared to establish a new baseline of environmental and economic information, bringing the federally managed groundfish fisheries into compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Analysis presents the impacts of groundfish fishing on the biological and economic environments that result from a broad array of policy-level programmatic fisheries management alternatives. Included in this revised draft Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is the recommended preferred alternative of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

Comments are due by October 15, 2003.